



## CISA CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Misinformation & Disinformation

The core of CISA's mission is to safeguard American's critical infrastructure. The nation has seen the corrosive effects of mis-, dis-, and mal-information (MDM) across a host of our critical infrastructure in recent years, impacting our election systems, telecommunications infrastructure, and our public health infrastructure. As there is no shortage of entities working on MDM issues, CISA is evaluating how to best engage in the space in an additive way, while safeguarding our credibility as an independent agency ahead of the next election cycle.

- **Where We Are.** CISA has a burgeoning MDM effort that focuses on building national resilience through public awareness. CISA engages with subject matter experts—researchers, think tanks, and public relations experts—to understand the threat of MDM, develop strategies to message to the public, and amplify trusted voices. These actions include directly engaging with social media companies to flag MDM, and creating a repository of factual guides and toolkits.
- **New Initiatives.** CISA is bringing on staff to address MDM related to the pandemic and incorporate lessons learned into longer-term strategies, as well as improving our ability to do analytics on narrative intervention. We are also working with federal partners to mature a whole-of-government approach to mitigating risks of MDM, framing which tools, authorities, and interventions are appropriate to the threats impacting the information environment.
- **Where We Want to Go in 2022.** Ahead of midterm elections in 2022, it will be critical to evaluate CISA's role in this space and ensure that the agency is providing additive value that fits within its unique capabilities and mission. One approach is to recognize CISA's responsibility for securing our election infrastructure – and ensuring CISA is a trusted resource in providing education on election processes and procedures to minimize misunderstanding and opportunities for MDM. CISA also wants to ensure it is set up to extract lessons learned from 2022 and apply them to the agency's work in the 2024.

### Questions for the Committee

1. What should CISA's role be in the MDM space? How should it leverage its unique capabilities and mission to contribute to this space, without becoming duplicative of other efforts and remaining focused on its mission?
2. How would the Committee balance CISA's efforts between the need to build resilience to MDM, broadly, versus activities to address to MDM narratives, specifically? This distinction can be understood as broad public education and awareness campaigns versus rumor control, amplifying credible information, type efforts.
3. How can CISA inspire innovators to partner with the government in a way that catalyzes availability of trusted information without being seen as government "propaganda"?
4. What is the right model for CISA engagement with social media and other media entities?
5. How should CISA and the USG maintain situational awareness of MDM and detect efforts to manipulate the information environment? What is the balance between social listening, privacy, and protected speech?

**From:** Kate Starbird [REDACTED]@uw.edu]  
**Sent:** 4/25/2022 7:04:03 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Spaulding (Gmail) [REDACTED]@gmail.com]  
**CC:** CISA\_CybersecurityAdvisoryCommittee [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Clark, Alaina [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Devi Nair [REDACTED]@csis.org]; EVANS, MARIEFRED (CTR) [REDACTED]@associates.cisa.dhs.gov]; Gauthier, Elizabeth [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Hale, Geoffrey (He/Him) [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Hess, Gwainevere [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Jackson, Helen [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Jason.Sanford [REDACTED]@illinois.gov]; Jennifer.March [REDACTED]@illinois.gov]; Snell, Allison (She/Her) [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Suzanne Spaulding (CSIS) [REDACTED]@csis.org]; Tate-Nadeau, Alicia [REDACTED]@illinois.gov]; Teitelman, Claire [REDACTED]@jpmchase.com]; Tsuyi, Megan [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; Vijaya Gadde [REDACTED]@gmail.com]; Wyman, Kim (She/Her/Hers) [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov]; [REDACTED]@illinois.gov]; [REDACTED]@jpmorgan.com; [REDACTED]@twitter.com; [REDACTED]@twitter.com  
**Subject:** Re: CSAC MDM Subcommittee Meeting - April 26 Materials

Hi Suzanne,

Thank you for these notes. Let's plan to chat in our next meeting (hopefully Friday) about how to build from these into a first set of recommendations — and make a decision about whether we'll be able to turn those over in time for the May 19 deadline.

Vijaya and TN, if you have additional recommendations or seeds for recommendations, please send those along prior to Friday, so we integrate them into our discussion!

Kate

On Apr 25, 2022, at 3:25 AM, Suzanne Spaulding [REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

Team,

I took a stab at some brief responses to the framing questions. (Pasted below) These could easily be made into recommendations if there is a consensus, but I am looking forward to the discussion and open to re-thinking!

Best,  
 Suzanne

- What should CISA's role be in the MDM space? How should it leverage its unique capabilities and mission to contribute to this space, without becoming duplicative of other efforts and remaining focused on its mission?

CISA should focus on MDM that risks undermining critical functions (e.g., MDM undermining trust in the election process, the courts; the financial system; or public health measures; promotes or provoke violence against key infrastructure or the public, etc). Activities should be similar to what CISA does to monitor, detect, warn about, and mitigate other threats to critical functions.

- How would the Committee balance CISA's efforts between the need to build resilience to MDM, broadly, versus activities to address to MDM narratives, specifically? This distinction can be understood as broad public education and awareness campaigns versus rumor control, amplifying credible information, type efforts.

CISA needs to do both. Broad public awareness campaigns (pineapple pizza) should be combined with analysis-driven efforts to warn about specific themes/narratives, particularly where adversary nations are pushing MDM (eg, elections are rife with fraud; democracy is irrevocably broken; courts are all political). Much of this resilience building could be through grants to outside organizations. CISA should also be a place where people can find out how to tap into credible sources, governmental and non-governmental.



- How can CISA inspire innovators to partner with the government in a way that catalyzes availability of trusted information without being seen as government “propaganda”?

Some people, including the media, see CISA as an authoritative source. Others will mistrust it. CISA should be mindful of this latter group but not abjure its role because of it. CISA should be a clearinghouse for authoritative and trusted sources. CISA should also provide information to outside researchers and others.

- What is the right model for CISA engagement with social media and other media entities?

CISA can be a poc, or help identify other poc's, between MDM targets and SM/media companies. CISA can also help educate SM/media about the role they play in MDM, and the role they could play in mitigating the threat through educating the public and building resilience.

- How should CISA and the USG maintain situational awareness of MDM and detect efforts to manipulate the information environment? What is the balance between social listening, privacy, and protected speech?

- This area needs more research and public discussion.

On Tue, Apr 19, 2022 at 12:34 PM CISA CybersecurityAdvisoryCommittee

<[REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon CSAC Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Misinformation & Disinformation (MDM) Subcommittee Members,

As a reminder, the next MDM Subcommittee meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 26, 2022, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET.** During the meeting, subcommittee members will review draft recommendations and begin to identify initial recommendations to CISA to present during the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting.

In preparation for the recommendations discussion during the April 26 meeting, we have attached the following documents:

- CSAC MDM Subcommittee April 26, 2022 Meeting Agenda
- Homework for the April 26 meeting
- CSAC MDM Subcommittee April 12, 2022 Meeting Summary

As a reminder, please be sure to review in advance of the meeting to ensure we can have a productive discussion regarding next steps.

The meeting will be hosted on Microsoft Teams, please [Click here to join the meeting](#). Dial-in information, Conference Bridge: [REDACTED]

Attendance at CSAC subcommittee meetings should be limited to subcommittee members and relevant support staff. As such, we ask that you please do not forward this calendar invite.

If you have any questions, please contact Megan Tsuyi, CSAC Designated Federal Officer, at [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov, or the CSAC support team at [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov.

Best Regards,

**The CISA Cybersecurity Advisory Committee Support Team**

Stakeholder Engagement Division

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

[\[REDACTED\]@cisa.dhs.gov](mailto:[REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Kate Starbird [REDACTED]@uw.edu>

To: [REDACTED]@twitter.com, [REDACTED]@twitter.com, Vijaya Gadde [REDACTED]@gmail.com, "Suzanne Spaulding (Gmail)" [REDACTED]@gmail.com, "Suzanne Spaulding (CSIS)" [REDACTED]@csis.org, "Tate-Nadeau, Alicia" [REDACTED]@illinois.gov

Cc: "Wyman, Kim (She/Her/Hers)" [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov, "Hale, Geoffrey (He/Him)"

[REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov, "Tsuyi, Megan" [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov

Bcc:

Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2022 16:39:11 +0000

Subject: HOMEWORK Re: CSAC MDM April 12 Meeting Summary

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of DHS. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your component SOC with questions or concerns.

Hello MDM Subcommittee members,

We had an excellent meeting on Tuesday and I want to provide updates to the members who were not able to attend as well as some homework for all of us. We've been asked to provide an initial set of recommendations to Director Easterly and the committee at the June meeting. (We may develop additional recommendations for incorporation at a future date. These would just be our first set.) Due to other dependencies within that process, we will need to **draft our initial recommendations by mid-May** — giving us just a month to develop those recommends.

With that timeline in mind I want to propose the following for the next few meetings:

- Prior to our April 26 meeting: subcommittee members suggest initial draft recommendations for discussion.
- April 26 meeting: Prioritize recommendation ideas and assign (self-select) subcommittee members to (co)write initial drafts.
- May 10: Discuss and refine initial drafts of recommendations.



This means that we all have a little **homework for April 26**. I'd like you all to come up with **2-3 initial ideas for recommendations** — and for you to **share these with the group via email by midday April 25** (the day prior to our next meeting). That will give us a little time to organize those for our conversation on April 26.

I'm including the original list of questions for our committee to help guide the brainstorming process.

To help with the generation process, I'll mention some initial recommendation ideas we surfaced in the last meeting:

- **Present a scoping/framing for CISA's mission around MDM and elections**, focusing on election methods, procedures, and infrastructure; and providing some insight for how to incorporate related concerns such as MDM threats to the judicial system.
  - **Recommend CISA convene organizations and election officials** for a strategic planning session prior to Election 2022 to identify threats/strategies for mitigation and to develop frameworks for long-tail of jurisdictions to develop plans and pre-stage resources to fight MDM.
  - **Create recommendations to continuing/refining the mission of Rumor Control for 2022/2024.**
- Please let me know if you have any questions or other feedback! I'm looking forward to a productive meeting next week!

Kate

Original framing questions:

- What should CISA's role be in the MDM space? How should it leverage its unique capabilities and mission to contribute to this space, without becoming duplicative of other efforts and remaining focused on its mission?
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On Apr 18, 2022, at 3:25 AM, CISA CybersecurityAdvisoryCommittee  
<[REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov> wrote:

CSAC MDM Subcommittee Members,

Attached, please find the meeting summary from the Tuesday, April 12, 2022 CSAC MDM subcommittee meeting. Please review the summary for important updates regarding next steps for the CSAC MDM Subcommittee. We anticipate sending the April 26 meeting agenda along and read-aheads early this week, please be sure to review in advance of the meeting to ensure we can have a productive discussion regarding next steps.

If you have any questions, please contact Megan Tsuyi, CSAC Designated Federal Officer, at [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov, or the CSAC support team at [REDACTED]@cisa.dhs.gov.

Best Regards,

**The CISA Cybersecurity Advisory Committee Support Team**

Stakeholder Engagement Division

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<CSAC MDM Subcommittee Meeting Summary\_04122022.pdf>